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**PRESENTATION OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMMERCE

TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

Regular Session of 2015

Wednesday, February 25, 2015

2:30 p.m.

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO. 928, RELATING TO THE CONSUMER
ADVOCATE.**

TO THE HONORABLE ANGUS L.K. McKELVEY, CHAIR,
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is Catherine Awakuni Colón, Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs ("Department"). The Department appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill No. 928, Relating to the Consumer Advocate.

The purpose of House Bill No. 928 is to amend Section 269-15(a), Hawaii Revised Statutes, so that reference to the Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs therein is changed to reference the Consumer Advocate in order to conform this provision with changes made pursuant to Act 108, Session Laws of Hawaii 2014.

The Department supports this housekeeping measure that was introduced as part of the Administration Package for 2015. In addition, the Department believes the proposed change is proper and would not impinge on any of the other functions of the Department as they may relate to public utilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 928. I will be happy to answer any questions the members of the Committee may have.



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TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

THE TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2015

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2015
2:30 p.m.

TESTIMONY OF JEFFREY T. ONO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF
CONSUMER ADVOCACY, DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER
AFFAIRS, TO THE HONORABLE ANGUS L.K. McKELVEY, CHAIR,
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 928 - RELATING TO THE CONSUMER ADVOCATE

DESCRIPTION:

This measure proposes to clarify Section 269-15(a), Hawaii Revised Statutes, so that the Public Utilities Commission may order the Consumer Advocate, rather than the Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, to appear in regulatory proceedings initiated by the Commission.

POSITION:

The Division of Consumer Advocacy supports this bill.

COMMENTS:

The Consumer Advocate supports this measure that amends Section 269-15(a) so that reference to the Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs therein is changed to reference the Consumer Advocate in order to conform with changes made pursuant to Act 108, Session Laws of Hawaii 2014.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

TESTIMONY OF RANDY IWASE
CHAIR, PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
TO THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMMERCE

FEBRUARY 25, 2015
2:30 p.m.

MEASURE: H.B. No. 928
TITLE: Relating to the Consumer Advocate

Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Woodson, and Members of the Committee:

DESCRIPTION:

This measure proposes to amend section 269-15(a) to clarify that the Public Utilities Commission ("Commission") may order the Consumer Advocate, rather than the Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, ("DCCA Director") to appear in regulatory proceedings initiated by the Commission to enforce Chapter 269, Hawaii Revised Statutes, ("Chapter 269") and related requirements.

POSITION:

The Commission supports this housekeeping measure and would like to offer the following comments for the Committee's consideration.

COMMENTS:

Prior to the passage of Act 108, Session Laws of Hawaii 2014 ("Act 108") the DCCA Director had been statutorily designated as the Consumer Advocate. Act 108 amended Chapter 269 so that the Executive Director of the Division of Consumer Advocacy would be statutorily designated as the Consumer Advocate. A number of updates were made to Chapter 269 to reflect this re-designation.

Section 269-15(a), Hawaii Revised Statutes, currently authorizes the Commission to order the DCCA Director, not the Consumer Advocate, to appear in certain regulatory enforcement proceedings. The Commission notes that this reference may have been overlooked in the passage of Act 108 and should be corrected to remain consistent with the rest of the chapter.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.